



## Concussions/Head Injuries

A Concussion is a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury which causes a physiological disturbance in brain function. A Concussion can be caused by a direct blow to the head or a direct blow to the body causing a whiplash affect (violent shaking of the head).

The best treatment to ensure a complete recovery is Physical AND Cognitive REST!

<b>Brain-Stressing Activities to Refrain from for First 24 Hours After Injury</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Playing video games/texting</li> <li>• Excessive computer use/television</li> <li>• Prolonged school work/reading</li> <li>• Physical activity</li> <li>• Avoid loud environments such as sporting events/school dances/concerts/ etc.</li> </ul>

The athlete should be closely monitored for at least 24 hours after the injury. Do NOT have the athlete take any pain medication without doctor's approval since this may mask symptoms which we want to observe. You do NOT have to wake the athlete up when sleeping because it is important for them to rest.

### **If you suspect that an Athlete has a concussion...**

1. Immediately remove the athlete from play and seek evaluation from the Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC).
2. If there is NO ATC present, observe the athlete for signs and symptoms of a concussion:

<b>Signs Observed by Coach/Parent</b>	<b>Symptoms Reported by Athlete</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Athlete appears dazed and sometimes with vacant stare</li> <li>• General confusion</li> <li>• Athlete forgets plays</li> <li>• Athlete seems disoriented</li> <li>• Athlete seems overly emotional (laughing, crying)</li> <li>• Athlete demonstrates balance issues and difficulty standing or walking</li> <li>• Loss of Consciousness---<b>CALL 911</b></li> <li>• Changes in normal behavior/personality</li> <li>• Repetitive speech or delayed speech</li> <li>• Vomiting by athlete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Nausea</li> <li>• Balance Problems or dizziness</li> <li>• Double/blurred vision</li> <li>• Sensitivity to light/noise</li> <li>• Feeling very fatigued/drowsy</li> <li>• Feeling "foggy/groggy"</li> <li>• Concentration/memory problems</li> <li>• Irritability</li> <li>• Sadness or nervous/anxious</li> <li>• Feeling more emotional</li> </ul>

\*(based on the National Federation of High School Associations' Sports Medicine Handbook, Third Edition)

3. If any of the signs/symptoms listed above are observed /reported, the athlete is NOT to return to play. If unsure, keep the athlete out until he/she is evaluated by a medical professional (Doctor/ATC/etc.).

### **If an athlete loses consciousness...call 911 immediately!!!**

4. Notify the athlete's parents/guardians of the possible concussion. Advise the athlete/parents to follow up with their medical doctor the following day and to seek emergency medical attention should condition worsen.

<b>Worsening Condition/Red Flags</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of consciousness</li> <li>• Repeated vomiting</li> <li>• Unequal pupils</li> <li>• Slurred speech</li> <li>• Decrease in responsiveness</li> <li>• Convulsions/seizures</li> <li>• Weakness/numbness/tingling of arms/legs</li> </ul>

**No athlete should return to play without being evaluated and cleared by his/her medical doctor. The athlete will follow a gradual return to play program following clearance from his/her medical doctor with the ATC.**